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COMMISSIONER

MEMORANDUM

TO: Title I Directors

FROM: Julie McCargar, Executive Director
Office of Federal Programs

RE: Distinguished Schools Recognition Program

DATE: September 14, 2004

On behalf of the Tennessee Department of Education and the National Association of State Title I Directors, I am pleased to invite you to participate in the Title I Distinguished Schools Recognition Program for 2004-2005.

The purpose of the Title I Distinguished Schools Recognition Program is to identify schools that are (1) ensuring that all children have access to effective instructional strategies and challenging academic content; and (2) demonstrating success in ensuring that all children, particularly educationally deprived children, make significant progress towards learning that content.

Highly successful Title I schools that are operating in high poverty attendance areas (40% and above) are encouraged to make application. The school may be a schoolwide program or a targeted assistance school. Educators are working diligently to meet state goals and deserve to be recognized for their efforts.

Each state may nominate two schools for national recognition:

- One school will represent the state's Title I schools that have exhibited exceptional student performance for two or more consecutive years.
- One school will represent the state's Title I schools that have made the most progress in significantly closing the achievement gap between student groups.

The state review committee will identify eligible schools for site visits based on a desk review of:

- 📖 Student Achievement Data
- 📖 Meets or exceeds Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)
- 📖 Poverty Data (School must have poverty rate of 40% or higher)
- 📖 Recognition History (School may not have received Title I national recognition in the previous year)

A site visit will be conducted by the Federal Programs consultant. The consultant will evaluate the effectiveness of the selected school in the following areas:

- 📖 Curriculum and Instruction
- 📖 Providing opportunities for all children to achieve
- 📖 Coordination with other programs
- 📖 Professional Development
- 📖 Partnerships with parents/families/communities

Schools will receive one of the following ratings in each category:

- 📖 Exemplary
- 📖 High Evidence
- 📖 Moderate Evidence
- 📖 No Evidence

Only schools that receive ratings of “Exemplary” or “High Evidence” in each of the categories may be nominated for state and national recognition.

Attached is the application package consisting of the (1) Recognition Nomination Form (2) Assurance Page and (3) Criteria Used in Review Process.

Please submit **the original and two copies** of the application for each school that makes application. The Office of Federal Programs must receive the Distinguished Schools Nomination Forms by October 25, 2004.

Schools selected for site visits will receive those visits from regional staff during the week of November 7.

National nominations will be submitted to Washington on November 16, 2004.

Please call Julie McCargar at 615.532. 6297 with any questions.

JM:ks

Cc: Federal Programs Staff
Field Service Center Directors